

Drug court

Benefit-cost estimates updated August 2014. Literature review updated July 2014.

Current estimates replace old estimates. Numbers will change over time as a result of model inputs and monetization methods.

The WSIPP benefit-cost analysis examines, on an apples-to-apples basis, the monetary value of programs or policies to determine whether the benefits from the program exceed its costs. WSIPP's research approach to identifying evidence-based programs and policies has three main steps. First, we determine "what works" (and what does not work) to improve outcomes using a statistical technique called meta-analysis. Second, we calculate whether the benefits of a program exceed its costs. Third, we estimate the risk of investing in a program by testing the sensitivity of our results. For more detail on our methods, see our [technical documentation](#).

Program Description: In therapeutic drug courts, youth with substance-abuse issues typically enter into a contract with the court and agree to comply with treatment and supervision requirements. While each drug court is unique, these therapeutic courts share similar characteristics. Drug courts typically involve a team of stakeholders (e.g., youth, guardian, judge, treatment provider, case manager, and probation officer). Components of the drug court model include treatment; judicial monitoring; random drug testing; incentives, rewards, and sanctions; and progressive stages (less monitoring with compliance). Drug courts can be pre- or post-adjudication models and the length of the program may vary.

Benefit-Cost Summary

Program benefits		Summary statistics	
Participants	\$1,034	Benefit to cost ratio	\$2.32
Taxpayers	\$2,092	Benefits minus costs	\$4,159
Other (1)	\$4,950	Probability of a positive net present value	65 %
Other (2)	(\$758)		
Total	\$7,318		
Costs	(\$3,159)		
Benefits minus cost	\$4,159		

The estimates shown are present value, life cycle benefits and costs. All dollars are expressed in the base year chosen for this analysis (2013). The economic discount rates and other relevant parameters are described in our [technical documentation](#).

Detailed Monetary Benefit Estimates

Source of benefits	Benefits to				
	Participants	Taxpayers	Other (1)	Other (2)	Total benefits
From primary participant					
Crime	\$0	\$1,512	\$4,528	\$758	\$6,798
Labor market earnings (hs grad)	\$1,051	\$448	\$519	\$0	\$2,019
Health care (educational attainment)	(\$17)	\$131	(\$97)	\$66	\$83
Adjustment for deadweight cost of program	\$0	\$0	\$0	(\$1,582)	(\$1,582)
Totals	\$1,034	\$2,092	\$4,950	(\$758)	\$7,318

We created the two "other" categories to report results that do not fit neatly in the "participant" or "taxpayer" perspectives. In the "Other (1)" category we include the benefits of reductions in crime victimization and the economic spillover benefits of improvement in human capital outcomes. In the "Other (2)" category we include estimates of the net changes in the value of a statistical life and net changes in the deadweight costs of taxation.

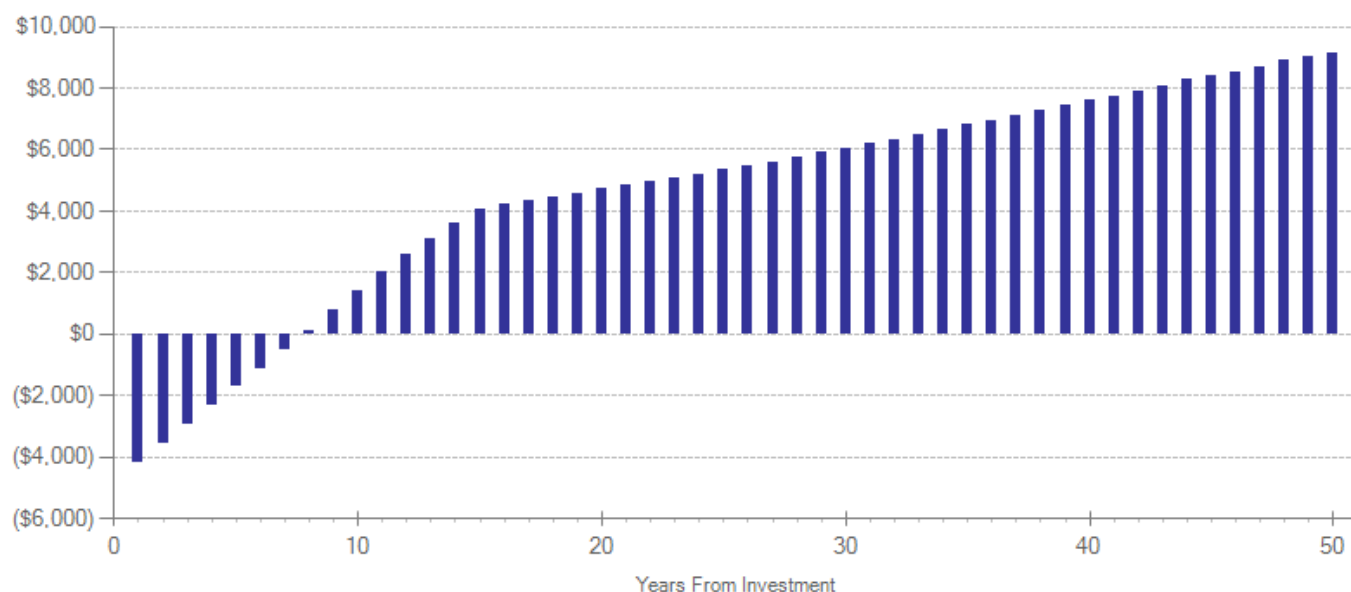
Detailed Cost Estimates

	Annual cost	Program duration	Year dollars	Summary statistics	
Program costs	\$2,645	1	2004	Present value of net program costs (in 2013 dollars)	(\$3,159)
Comparison costs	\$0	1	2004	Uncertainty (+ or - %)	10 %

Anspach, D. F., Ferguson, A. S., & Phillips, L. L. (2003). Evaluation of Maine's statewide juvenile drug treatment court program. Augusta, ME: University of Southern Maine.

The figures shown are estimates of the costs to implement programs in Washington. The comparison group costs reflect either no treatment or treatment as usual, depending on how effect sizes were calculated in the meta analysis. The uncertainty range is used in Monte Carlo risk analysis, described in our [technical documentation](#).

Cumulative Net Cash Flows Over Time (Non-Discounted Dollars)



Meta-Analysis of Program Effects

Outcomes measured	Primary or secondary participant	No. of effect sizes	Unadjusted effect size (random effects model)		Adjusted effect sizes and standard errors used in the benefit-cost analysis					
					First time ES is estimated			Second time ES is estimated		
			ES	p-value	ES	SE	Age	ES	SE	Age
Crime	Primary	12	-0.061	0.634	-0.062	0.096	16	-0.062	0.096	26

Citations Used in the Meta-Analysis

- Anspach, D.F., Ferguson, A.S., & Phillips, L.L. (2003). *Evaluation of Maine's statewide juvenile drug treatment court program: Fourth year outcome evaluation report*. Augusta: University of Southern Maine.
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